

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 04381 181353Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----043941 181406Z /47

O P 181345Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4297
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN

S E C R E T LONDON 04381

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE. XF
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: BRITISH VIEWS ON ACTION

REF: A) STATE 70196; B) LONDON 4303

1. ACCORDING TO TOMKYS IN FCO MORNING MARCH 18,
BRITISH ARE INCLINED TO GO ALONG WITH US ON THE RESOLU-
TION PACKAGE WITH ONE EXCEPTION. OUR DRAFT RESOLUTION
CONTAINS THE PHRASE REGARDING THE UN FORCE "EXCEPT THE
PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL." THIS WOULD
EXCLUDE A BRITISH CONTINGENT.

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2. WHILE THE BRITISH HAVE NOT YET FINALIZED O POSITION
THAT THEY WOULD OFFER A BRITISH CONTINGENT, THEY REASON
AGAINST THE EXCLUSION AS FOLLOWS: URQUHART'S ESSENTIAL
REQUIREMENT IS TO PUT TOGETHER A VIABLE FORCE QUICKLY
ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB. THE BRITISH HAVE NO WISH TO TRY
TO PUSH THEMSELVES UNWANTED INTO THE PEACEKEEPING FORCE.
HOWEVER, IF THE EXCLUSION OF A BRITISH CONTINGENT MEANS

THAT THE UN SECRETARIAT WOULD HAVE TO RELY PROPORTION-
ATELY MORE ON AFRICAN OR ASIAN CONTINGENTS WHICH COULD
NOT MOVE FAST OR EFFECTIVELY, THE RESULT COULD BE A
DISASTER.

3. IF THE BRITISH POSITION IS FIRMED UP, THE EXCLUDING
PHRASE REMOVED FROM THE DRAFT RESOLUTION, AND THE
BRITISH OFFER A CONTINGENT, FCO THINKING IS THAT THE
US COULD MAKE A DEAL WITH THE USSR TO KEEP BOTH SUPER-
POWERS OUT OF THE PEACEKEEPING FORCE.

4. FCO UNDERSTANDS THAT SO FAR ONLY THE CANADIANS HAVE
VOLUNTEERED A CONTINGENT.

5. ACCORDINGLY, TOMKYS EXPECTED THAT THE BRITISH EM-
BASSY IN WASHINGTON WOULD BE SEEKING TO TAKE UP THIS
ISSUE WITH SECRETARY VANCE OR AHERTON TODAY, MARCH 18.
TOMKYS STRESSED THAT DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT
RPT NOT DISCLOSE TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY THAT THE FCO HAS
ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE WITH EMBASSY LONDON
AND THAT THE LATTER HAS REPORTED IT TO WASHINGTON.
TOMKYS HAS BEEN ALERTING US BECAUSE THE TIMING FACTOR
IN THE RESOLUTION HAS BECOME SO CRITICAL.

6. INCIDENTALLY, BRITISH NOW UNDERSTAND UNSYG IS
THINKING IN TERMS OF FAR LESS THAN 12,000 TROOPS AND
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EVIDENTLY MISUNDERSTOOD URQUHART'S POSITION ON THIS.

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